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The Daily Star

NIRMAN TILES
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In More Shades
Than The Rainbow
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NEWS BRIEFS

Hasina off
to Vienna

The Awami League Chief and
Leader of the Opposition in
Parliament Sheikh Hasina left
Dhaka yesterday for Vienna to
attend a 15-day conference on
World Human Rights, beginning
there from June 10. Sheikh
Hasina is scheduled to present
her paper at the inaugural session
of the conference, reports
BSS.

Sherpur college
closed

SHERPUR, June 7: Sherpur
Government College was closed
Monday following a clash
between Jatityabadi Chhatra Dal
(JCD) and Jatiya Party backed
Sangsam Chhatra Samaj.
Campus sources said authorities
closed the college till June
16 and also postponed the
students union election scheduled
for June 15, reports UNB.

Dacoits swoop on
boat: 9 injured

SIRAJGANJ, June 7: Nine
people were injured, two of
them seriously, when armed
dacoits swooped on a passenger
boat at the estuary of Karotowa-
Jamuna in Shahjadpur thana
Sunday night. The dacoits
armed with lethal weapons
stabbed Sirajul Islam, 30, and
Rafiqul Islam, 15, when
resisted. They were admitted to
Purnimghati Health Complex in
Ullapara thana, reports UNB.

Contraband seized;
2 arrested in Ctg

CHITTAGONG, June 7:
Police arrested two persons and
recovered a huge quantity of
contraband worth Tk 50 lakh
from a village in Baskali thana
Monday. Acting on a tip, police
raided some houses at
Mouvipara village and seized
the contraband which included
6,500 cartons of foreign
cigarettes and 2,000 pounds of
nylon current nets. The
arrested were identified as Fazul
Karim and Mahmudul Huq.
Police were searching for one
Abu Siddique reportedly
involved in the smuggling of the
contraband, reports UNB.

25 held on various
charges in city

Police rounded up 25 people
from different parts of the city
during last 24 hours on various
charges, a DMP press release
said yesterday, reports UNB.

Judge orders confiscation of Janata Tower

Ershad, Raushan, 17 others get 7 years' jail each

Former President Hussain
Mohammad Ershad was today
sentenced to seven years in jail
for abuse of power and corruption,
report agencies.

Begum Raushan Ershad, a
co-accused in the case, was
also sentenced to 7 years' simple
imprisonment. Seventeen
other accused including former
Chief Whip and minister M A
Sattar and former Rajuk
Chairman Rahmatullah — were
also sentenced to similar terms
in jail.

Judge Anwaruddin Sikder
while delivering the 91-page
judgement in the Special Case
No 11 of 1992, said the former
President was found guilty under
Section 5(2) of Act II of
1947 of the Prevention of
Corruption Act for committing
offence of criminal misconduct
as defined under Section 5(1) D
and 5(1) E of the said act.

The Judge ordered that all
plots directed by Ershad for
allotment in the KCA, mentioned
in this case, including the

Janata Tower and other
structures therein, be confiscated to
the state. He also ordered the
law enforcing agencies to ensure
the arrest of the two
absconders, Nawab Mia and Abu
Hanif.

The one-man Special Court,
however, acquitted one Amza-
dul Haq, an absconder, as the
charges against him could not
be proved.

Judge Sikder sentenced
Ershad on one count although
the two main charges against
the former General — misuse of
his official position as public
servant and possessing wealth
disproportionate to his known
source of income — were proved
“beyond all reasonable
doubt.”

After the pronouncement of
the judgement Begum Ershad
and 15 others, including two
other women, were taken to the
Dhaka Central Jail.

The Judge denied a prayer
from Ershad's chief defence
See Page 12 Col 1



H M Ershad



Raushan Ershad



The Janata Tower at Kawran Bazar — Star photo

'Distortion' of JS proceedings by BTV

Opposition stages walkout

By Staff Correspondent

The opposition in Parliament,
barring the Jamaat
staged a walk-out yesterday
following a stormy debate over a
controversial projection of
Sunday's proceedings of the
House by the state-run televi-
sion, BTV.

The opposition parties, later
in a joint press briefing, announced
that they would not
participate in the proceedings of
the budget session unless the
concerned script-writer is
removed.

The unscheduled debate was
sparked off when Tofaei Ahmed
of the Awami League (AL) drew
the attention of the chair to
alleged deliberate distortion by
BTV of Sunday's proceedings.

Tofaei said the Parliament
round-up commented that the
AL MPs had begged apology
with folded hands when the
Law Minister was referring to a
ruling delivered by Speaker
Maek Uki in 1974.

Tofaei said that, in fact, they
had appealed with folded hands

for the Law Minister to end his
lengthy deliberation on the
constitutional point relating to
the Speaker's obligation to
function as the acting President
in the absence of the head of state.

Bangladesh Television did
not air its usual Parliament
round-up last night. BNP
joint secretary and Works
Minister Rafiqul Islam Miah
told The Daily Star late last
night that the opposition
should join the Jatiya
Sangsad proceedings since
the BTV had already
complicated with the opposition's
demand for discontinuation
of the programme.

The opposition, however,
meets today to decide its
next course of action.

The AL MP felt that the television
reporter had deliberately
distorted the proceedings to
tarnish the image of the AL and
demanded that the reporter be
immediately removed.
See Page 12 Col 7

'Opened, security checked' letter of Hasina placed in JS for action

By Staff Correspondent

An 'opened and security
checked' letter of the opposition
leader and Awami League chief
Sheikh Hasina was placed in
the Parliament on Monday
seeking the Speaker's action.

Abul Hassan Chowdhury,
one of the whips of the AL,
parliamentary party, drew
attention of the Speaker just
after the hour-long question-
answer session and submitted the
letter to the Speaker.

He said that the letter was
sent from Nepal to the AL chief
See Page 12 Col 6

JS passes 3 more bills

By Staff Correspondent

The Jatiya Sangsad yesterday
afternoon okayed three
more bills bringing the total
number of bills to four passed
during the current budget session.

The three bills which got
passage yesterday were: The
Bangladesh (Freedom Fighters)
Welfare Trust (Amendment) Bill,
1993, The Securities and
Exchange Commission Bill,
1993 and The Securities and
Exchange (Amendment) Bill,
1993.

Earlier on Sunday the House
passed The Banking Company
(Amendment) Bill 1993.
[Detailed report on Page 2]

MPs allowed to import duty-free cars

Leader of the House Prime
Minister Begum Khaleda Zia
yesterday assured Parliament
members that they would be
allowed to import duty-free cars
after the national budget, reports
BSS.

Amidst applause from the
members present, Begum Zia
said: "There is a law for import
of duty-free cars by the
members. We will surely give them
the facility after the budget."

The issue was raised when
Jamaat-e-Islami member
Maulana Abdus Sobhan drew
the attention of the chair saying
that privilege of the members
was being infringed as the
democratically-elected government
had failed to allow the import
of duty-free cars even after
two and a half years.

Ruling BNP and Jamaat-e-
Islami members were present
during the discussion.

Earlier, Speaker Shaikh
Razzak Ali drew the attention of
the Deputy Leader of the House
Prof Badruddoza Chowdhury
since the Leader of the House
was not present.

Prof Chowdhury said that he
See Page 12 Col 3

Tk 9 cr spent for holding 7th SAARC summit

The government spent about
Tk 8,94,85,465.14 for holding
the Seventh SAARC Summit
meeting in Dhaka from April 10
to 11. Foreign Minister ASM
Mostafizur Rahman told the
Jatiya Sangsad yesterday, reports
BSS.

Replying to a question from
Awami League member Moham-
mad Rahmat Ali, the Foreign
Minister said besides the Ministry
of Foreign Affairs, a good
number of ministries and
agencies were engaged in holding
the SAARC summit. All the
agencies and organisations had
submitted their statement of
expenditure to the Chief Account-
ants Officer of the Foreign Ministry
which were awaiting final
acceptance and coordination.

He, however, pointed out
that the expenditure for the
twice postponed SAARC summit
in December, 1992 and January,
1993 had been included in
the total expenditure.

3 murdered in city

By Staff Correspondent

Three people were murdered
in separate incidents and one
committed suicide in the city
Monday.

Our DMCH Correspondent
reports: A sports organiser was
attacked by a group of four to
five armed men at Mahutully
Road, Bangshal and was
repeatedly stabbed with sharp
knives at around 10:45 am
Monday.

Anwar Hossain, 40, a
founder-member of the Usha
Kriya Chakra, was rushed to the
Dhaka Medical College Hospital
where he succumbed to his
injuries.

Kotwali Police Station
sources told The Daily Star that
Anwar was killed as a sequel to
a previous quarrel.

The police raided several
places in search of the murder-
ers but failed to make any
arrests.

Police, however, claimed that
they were able to identify the
miscreants, but refused to
disclose their identities.
See Page 12 Col 6

Clashes mark strike in West Bengal: 40 hurt

NEW DELHI, June 7: At
least 40 people were injured
today during a general strike
sponsored by opposition parties
against the Marxist government
of the eastern Indian state of
West Bengal, police said, says
AFP.

Police lobbed tear gas and
used batons as opposition
activists attacked policemen and
state-owned buses and clashed
with government supporters,
the Press Trust of India (PTI)
said.

Shops and businesses were
shut and private transport went
off the roads across Calcutta,
the state capital, while train
services were paralysed in West
Bengal amid sporadic violence,
the news agency said.

Offices and banks reported
poor attendance.

Police said in Calcutta that
20 buses and 10 trams were
damaged and 30 shops torched
during the violence. Six police-
men were among the injured.

Ishaq Khan faces threat of impeachment

ISLAMABAD, June 7:
Pakistani President Ghulam
Ishaq Khan is facing the first
serious threat of impeachment
as Prime Minister Nawaz
Sharif's cabinet colleagues
demand action against his
"unethical" moves, reports AFP.

Official sources here said today
that the ministers were
almost unanimous in demanding
the impeachment of the 78-
year-old president when Sharif
chaired a high-level meeting
last Sunday which was
attended by his political allies
and several senior ministers.

The ministers accused the
president of resorting to
"unethical and unconstitutional
actions" to destabilise Sharif's
government, insiders said.

Sources said the charges
listed against Ishaq Khan
include his alleged role in
"harming" the national
economy, and damaging the
country's democratic institutions
and prestige.

Several ministers demanded
that the president voluntarily
step down or else the
government should initiate
impeachment proceedings, the
sources said.

Ishaq Khan's popularity
graph dipped drastically after
the Supreme Court reinstated
the Sharif government on May
26, merely five weeks after the
president had dissolved the
National Assembly.

The court ruled that in
sacking Sharif the president
had acted "beyond the ambit of
powers conferred on him"
under a controversial clause in
the country's constitution.

Sharif secured the
confidence of the restored
lower house with a comfortable
majority the next day and in a
nationwide broadcast later
pledged to follow a policy of
forget and forgive.

But the power tussle,
stemming from Sharif's move
to abolish the so-called Eighth
Amendment granting hiring
and firing authority to the
president, did not cease.

In open retaliation, Ishaq
Khan's appointed governors in
the Punjab and the North West
Frontier Province, dissolved the
respective provincial assemblies
blocking changes for Sharif to
regain the power wrested by
the president's men soon after his
April 18 ouster.

The actions, which came
only four days after the highest
judicial forum ruled the
National assembly dissolution
as illegal, triggered new court
battles in the provinces.

Sharif allies challenged the
governors' orders in the Lahore
and Peshawar High Courts
as being in bad faith (malafide)
and stepped up the demand
for action against Ishaq Khan.

Observers said the hostility
between the President and the
Prime Minister has also created
a new divide in the bureau-
cracy, police and politics.

Sharif had to seek security
help from the paramilitary
rangers after losing confidence
in the Punjab police, who had
been withdrawn from his official
residence in Lahore which is
under the administrative
control of the rival provincial
government.

Punjab's caretaker Chief
Minister Manzoor Watto was
transferred to civil servants
while Sharif himself decided to
offer an olive branch to his
arch rival and former premier
Benazir Bhutto to isolate the
president.

See Page 12 Col 5

Benazir names body for talks with Sharif

ISLAMABAD, June 7:
Pakistani opposition leader
Benazir Bhutto named a
committee today to represent her
coalition People's Democratic
Alliance (PDA) in reconciliation
talks with her arch-rival Prime
Minister Nawaz Sharif, reports
Reuters.

However, the coalition of
opposition parties led by the
former premier named seven
low-ranking officials in an
apparent snub to the
government committee of four
cabinet ministers.

The first thing the govern-
ment should do is to create a
conducive atmosphere for
talks," PDA Secretary General
Khurshid Mahmud Kasuri
told reporters.

Sharif offered an olive
branch to his opponents in a
speech in the National
Assembly on May 28, and
Bhutto accepted.

Kasuri called on the govern-
ment to withdraw charges that
have been pending against
Bhutto since she was sacked by
President Ghulam Ishaq Khan
in August 1990.

He also asked an end to
political victimisation of the
opposition as a precondition for
talks.

Stunning defeat for govt in Hun Sen's province: Final results tomorrow

PHNOM PENH, June 7:
Nearly final results today of the
UN-organized Cambodian
election gave the government
a stunning defeat at the hands
of the opposition Royalist
FUNCINPEC party in the
country's most populous province,
Kompong Cham, reports AFP.

Nationwide, FUNCINPEC
captured 45.2 per cent of the
vote compared to the govern-
ment's 38.6 per cent. The
government has said it will
not recognise defeat until the
results are certified by an
independent, non-UN panel.

Results are due to be
finalised after tendered, or
absentee ballots are counted,
most likely by Wednesday, a
UN spokesman Eric Falt said.

In eastern Kompong Cham,
with more than 600,000 voters
cast, the Royalists were likely
to translate a 52 per cent
victory into 10 of the province's
18 seats in the new 120-member

constituent assembly.

The government's Cambodian
People's Party (CPP) was
likely to have only six seats
with 30 per cent.

The remaining seats were
likely to go to the Buddhist
Liberal Democratic Party (BLDP)
of former Prime Minister
Son Sann, and one other
anti-government party.

Seats will be allocated
after the 370,000 tendered
ballots nationwide are
counted, Falt said.

The strong defeat dealt a
blow to Phnom Penh
Minister Hun Sen, who
comes from Kompong Cham
along with other senior
government officials, and
staked his reputation
on a victory there.

His brother, Hun Nheng,
who is the governor, was
seventh on the list of CPP
candidates and lost his seat.

Meanwhile, the Khmer
Rouge attacked a platoon of UN

peacekeepers from Pakistan
in northern Cambodia early today,
prompting a three-hour battle
that left two Pakistanis injured
and several Khmer Rouge dead,
a UN spokesman said.

About 150 to 200 guerrillas
attacked the Pakistani camp
south of the Peah Vihear
provincial capital before dawn
using B-40 rocket-propelled
grenades and automatic
weapons, UN spokesman
Eric Falt said.

The Pakistanis returned
for three hours with several
thousand rounds of ammunition
and 36 mortar rounds, he
said.

Up to five Khmer Rouge
were killed or injured, and
one Pakistani soldier lost part
of his leg when a rocket hit
his bunker, Falt said.

The other Pakistani was
lightly injured and treated
on the scene. The shooting
stopped about three hours
later after

reinforcements from another
Pakistani company were sent
in, he said.

Meanwhile, in the same
province over the weekend, a
UN military observer driving
to the Thai border checkpoint
north of Choam Khasn hit a
landmine which blew up his
vehicle, Falt said.

He was not injured, but a
second UN vehicle sent to aid
him also hit a mine and was
damaged.

UN military observers drive
daily up the road — built by
a Thai logging company
which used to have concessions
in Preah Vihear — to man
the checkpoint at the border.

It was the first known
incident of mines placed on
the road, which is controlled
by the Phnom Penh
government and was the
scene of the largest logging
violation in the first
days following a moratorium
on exports from Cambodia.

Manu, Dhalai flowing over red mark 2.5 lakh people marooned in Maulvibazar

From Our Correspondent

MAULVIBAZAR, June 7:
Some 2.5 lakh people have
been affected by flood water
as the rivers Manu and Dhalai
in the district continued to
flow above the danger level.

Officials here said that 21
unions out of 67 have been
inundated while roads between
Maulvibazar town and Kamal-
ganj, Kulaura and Baralekha
have gone under water.

According to the latest
readings Monday, the Manu
was flowing 1.10 meter above
the danger level while the
Dhalai was flowing 0.92 metre
above red mark.

The embankment along the
river Manu was washed away
at three places in Kulaura
Sunday while the Dhalai
embankment in Kamalganj
thana has been breached
at four places.

The worst affected unions
in the district are: Chandnigon,
Ekatana in Sadar thana, Hajl-

pur, Sharifpur, Kadipur,
Prit-himpasha, Sagorenal
and Langla unions of
Kulaura, and Kamarchowk
and Mansuranagar of
Kamalganj thana.

During a visit to the affected
Munshibazar areas in
Kamalganj thana Monday,
this correspondent found
most of the village homes
under water.

Thousands of men,
women and children with
their belongings have taken
shelter on the flood protection
embankments, school buildings
and other high places.

Still more people were
seen coming to the shelters
wading through chest-deep
water.

According to the district
officials, one relief centre
has been opened at Kamalganj.

In Maulvibazar town,
panicky people have begun
taking shelter on high buildings
fearing a breach in the
town protection embankment
by the on-rushing waters
of the Manu.